

Foley Mountain Day Camp Handbook

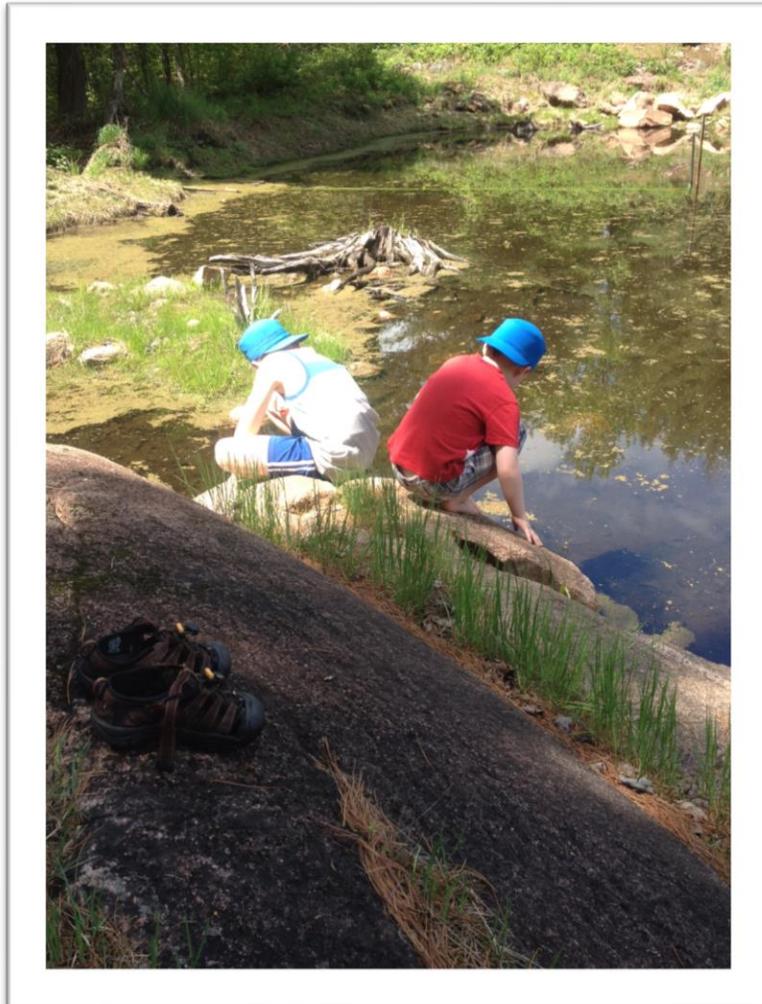


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INTRODUCTION

The following handbook provides an overall guideline to our day camp program to ensure that you and your child get the most fun and excitement possible from the experience. Please read this information carefully and share important details with your child to ensure that they understand what the instructors expect from campers and what items your child should bring along with them.

WHAT IS NATURE DAY CAMP AT FOLEY MOUNTAIN?

Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp is a chance for children aged 6-12 to get outside, explore, be active, and have fun in the outdoors! Activities will include but not be limited to nature exploration, games, visits to the swimming area, and crafts. We will be spending most of the day outside and we cannot stress enough how important it is for your child to be dressed appropriately for the weather conditions.

- Regular Hours
 - o 9:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Foley Mountain Interpretive Centre located at 480 Foley Mountain Lane (follow the park road all the way to the end staying to the right at the fork)
- Facilities
 - o The camp is run out of the “Nature Discovery Centre” in the basement of the Interpretive Centre. Follow down the stone steps to the basement entrance.
- Contact Information
 - o Site Phone Number – 613-273-3255. In the case of an emergency, if someone cannot be immediately reached at this number, please phone 613-539-8048.
 - o Email – rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca

Teachers

At Foley Mountain, educators are hired for their experience and expertise in outdoor experiential education. Our educators are most often qualified Ontario Certified Teachers (OCT) with experience in a variety of outdoor education settings. All our staff have first aid training and have cleared a vulnerable sector screening (in-depth criminal reference screening) with their local police department.

A Typical Day at Camp

While we will have different activities planned for each camp based on themes, camper interests, weather conditions, etc., we do have a general schedule for our day:

9:00 am	Camper arrival and sign in, self-directed activities while everyone arrives
9:15 am	Daily announcements and prepare to go outside
9:30 am	First program block
10:15 am	Snack and play break
10:30 am	Second program block
12:00 pm	Lunch
12:30 pm	Craft
1:00 pm	Choices time (activities chosen by the campers that they can participate in)
1:30 pm	Continue choice time and get ready for the beach
2:00 pm	Beach play and swim
3:15 pm	Return to the building for changing, clean up, pack up, snack
3:45 pm	Wrap up announcements and “Roses and Thorns”
4:00 pm	Departure

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Program Fees

- for children aged 6 – 12, Monday – Friday, 9am-4pm in summer months
- \$200/child/week, \$175/child/week for additional children in the same family

Registration and Payment Information

- In order to participate in Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp programs, registration must be completed in full before the program begins.
- For pre-registered programs, payment must be made in full for the program session before the program begins. All program fees are invoiced through our main office with registration.
- Registrations can be paid by credit card, cash, or cheques made out to the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority.
- Cheques that are returned are subject to a \$25 administrative fee.

Refunds and Cancellation Policy

- Refunds are not given unless there are extreme circumstances that prevent a child from participating. Staff reserve the right to determine and assess these circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
- Refund policy for day camp sessions: \$25 fee up to one week before session starts. No refunds less than seven days prior to start of session.
- A full refund will be given if a program is cancelled due to insufficient registration.
- Any child who leaves during the session due to expulsion or any other reason that staff do not deem to fall under the “extreme circumstances” as noted above will not be refunded any portion of the program fees.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Privacy Policy

Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp takes the privacy of its clients seriously and we have taken steps to protect it. Any personal data shared with us, including photographic images, will be processed strictly in accordance with privacy legislation and will be used for the purposes that you have consented to. We will not share details with third parties without consent, except where we are legally compelled or obligated to do so. Please note that where consent is given to share images on the internet, they can be viewed worldwide including countries where Canadian data protection law does not apply.

Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns about protecting the privacy of the information you provide.

Illness Policy

In the following cases, we ask that participants (including students, teachers, and accompanying volunteers) stay home from day camp for at least 24 hours after their last symptom has subsided:

- Temperature over 101 degrees F or 38.3 degrees C
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (watery, profuse stools)

Should the above-mentioned situations arise while at day camp, the affected participants will be asked to return home.

Participants affected by communicable diseases including but not limited to measles, chicken pox, mumps, flu, strep throat, viral pneumonia, conjunctivitis (pink-eye), etc., are asked to stay home from day camp until their health care provider (i.e. naturopath, doctor, nurse, etc.) has communicated that it is safe for them to attend. Any outbreak of communicable disease will be communicated to parents via email.

Head lice is not considered a communicable disease but rather an annoying condition which spreads rapidly. If a participant is affected by head lice or nits are present we ask that you:

- Contact staff at Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp immediately so that other families can be informed (the affected individuals will remain anonymous)
- Follow the treatment suggestions on the information sheet provided by Lanark, Leeds and Grenville Public Health

Medication Administration Policy

Campers are not to administer their own medications, unless previously approved by staff. Parents/guardians are to bring all medications to day camp staff where it will be stored and administered by staff. Parents/guardians are to fill out a **Child Medical History and Prescription Medication Records Form** upon drop off of medication.

Food Policies

Nut-Free Zone

Due to the prevalence of life-threatening nut allergies, we ask that participants refrain from bringing nuts to day camp. Soy and sunflower seed substitutes for nut butters are welcome. Since day camp is located in a public conservation area and our park buildings are offered for event rentals, we cannot guarantee that they are nut free.

Snack-Sharing

In addition, we ask that participants do not share or trade snacks, as this ensures the health, safety, and happiness of the community.

Garbage-Less Lunches

We encourage participants to try to bring a garbage-less lunch. At the same time, we ask that parents/caregivers consider the size/weight/safety of the containers in which their child's snacks are packed. At day camp we seek to empower even our youngest participants to carry their own snacks and water bottles on our adventures, which is totally possible with small containers.

Hand washing and Drinking Water

Participants will be asked to wash their hands with soap and water or use an appropriate alternative if in the field before eating and after using the bathroom. They will also be able to refill their water bottles on site.

Emergency Procedures and First Aid

Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp has written emergency procedures with which all educators and volunteers are familiar. A copy of the procedures, including camper emergency contact information, is carried by an educator/volunteer at all times in the emergency/first aid backpack.

The emergency/first aid backpack is equipped with such things as various sizes of bandages, antiseptic wipes and polysporin, a whistle, a hypothermia blanket, etc.

Risk Management

Definition

Risk is an inherent and an integral part of nature day camp and indeed of healthy child development. Risky Play can be defined as “a thrilling and exciting activity that involves a risk of physical injury, and play that provides opportunities for challenge, testing limits, exploring boundaries and learning about the risks of injury” (Little and Wyver, 2008).

Foley Mountain Day Camp educators and volunteers endeavour to co-assess and co-manage risk with participants. We believe this to be an essential skill for children to acquire and for adults to support. By embracing physical, emotional, and social risk taking we provide an environment for children where they feel in control, capable and trusted to make decisions for themselves.

Risk Assessment

Day camp staff implement dynamic risk assessments every day, based on need, as we visit various natural sites on the property and determine suitability of the site for the goals of the lesson and safety of the children. The following risk assessments are conducted:

- seasonal risk assessments
- activity or experience risk assessments
- daily risk assessments

Activities

When we are assessing risks in an area or related to an activity, we are always balancing the benefits with the risks, as we guide the children toward safe behavior in the forest. During day camp, children may partake in perceived ‘risky’ activities including, but are not limited to:

- Hiking off trail
- Playing with sticks
- Throwing rocks
- Climbing trees and rocky outcrops
- Digging in the soil
- Tasting edible plants
- Making and cooking over a fire
- Exploring around a body of water
- Using tools to build, create and explore

Safety in the Forest

Educators and volunteers are provided with safety training, policies and procedures. These measures create an environment and culture that takes safety seriously and uses a proactive approach to risk management. Campers and teachers actively play a role in personal and group safety.

Our safety principles include:

- Constantly assess risk as conditions change (dynamic risk assessment)
- Set up a safe space with boundaries and safety guidelines
- Observe the children's interactions with each other and with nature
- Spot the children during more challenging physical activity
- Gently guide the children to safer activities if required
- Head counts are carried out throughout the day, especially before and after transitions to different sites
- Two-way communication will be maintained by teachers and supervisory staff by way of cell phones and/or two-way radios
- In depth seasonal trail checks- looking for dangerous conditions
- Weather and environmental safety including- teaching students about hydration, application of sunscreen and insect repellent, changing of wet clothes
- Site Supervisor conducts monthly site and facilities inspections
- Educating campers on safe water ways practices; such as safety equipment needed, and guidelines for safe water way play

If we feel that the children's play is becoming dangerous, we will redirect the children and remind them that it is important to stay safe outdoors. If your child gets a bump, scratch, or a bruise, we will provide necessary first aid and let you know at the end of the session.

Some of the risks inherent to nature day camp and outdoor play include, but are not limited to:

- Injuries from executing strenuous and demanding physical activities, possibly on uneven ground in the forest
- Injuries from failing to properly use tools, such as carving knives
- Injuries resulting from matches or fire
- Health problems relating to the sun and heat
- Contracting poison ivy
- The presence of wild animals and ticks
- Inclement weather

Procedures for Tools Used at Nature Day Camp

Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp may use tools that include but are not limited to mallets, saws, brace and bit drills, and power drills, loppers and pruning shears. The use of tools gives children a great sense of accomplishment, authentic experiences and independence as well as develops confidence and self-esteem. Tool use also enhances gross, fine motor development and hand-eye coordination. Children learn to manage age-appropriate risks, use, safety and care of tools. Tools will be used one-on-one with a child and educator, following proper safety procedures, to ensure the safe use of any tool.

Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp Staff : Participant Ratios

At day camp, the ratio of unaccompanied school-aged children aged 6-12 to educator/volunteer is 10:1.

If your child requires one-on-one support in the classroom, with the help of an EA or support staff, then parents/guardian will be responsible for providing this support during day camp, at their own expense. We are unable to provide 1:1 child to educator ratios at day camp and we want every child to have the same opportunities and experiences available to them.

Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp Staff Responsibilities

The responsibilities of a day camp educator/volunteer are wide-ranging and include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ensuring the physical safety of participants by co-assessing and co-managing risk with them on an ongoing basis such that all participants feel connected to and comfortable in the natural world
- considering the social and emotional safety of participants, and endeavouring to foster a caring and respectful community so that the risk taking and question posing necessary for deep, inquiry-based learning can occur
- modeling care and respect for the natural world
- modeling the safe use of the tools and supplies
- engaging with and closely observing campers – following their lead during programming as well as the evolution of their interests, their questions, and struggles

Behaviour Guidelines

Our goal is to ensure Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp is a positive experience for all our campers. Please inform staff ahead of time if your child has any special needs or considerations so that we can make your child's experience a positive one.

Here are our Behaviour Principles:

- No Violence
- Respect all living things
- Respect diversity
- Respect all people – yourself, your peers, your educators
- Respect the learning environment
- Use things with care
- Enjoy learning
- Help others learn
- Be prepared
- To listen and respond to safety instructions (i.e. coming back to educators when called if they are too far from the group, staying within boundaries and safe areas, etc.)

Our staff are trained to deal with mild to moderate behaviour issues as they occur. If issues arise with a camper's behaviour at day camp, staff will communicate with the family in person, over the phone, and/or by email as appropriate to the situation. If a camper's behaviour proves to be an ongoing issue in relation to our behaviour principles, day camp staff will work with the family and the camper to develop a behaviour plan to help resolve the issue. In the rare case where this process is not successful, the camper may be asked to leave the program if their behaviour proves to be unsafe for themselves, the other campers, or the staff.

If your child is severely misbehaving or is verbally or physically abusing another camper or instructor, Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp reserves the right to expel or suspend a child from the program should their behaviour be deemed unsafe for themselves or others. In this event, a phone call home to parents/guardians will be made, the child will be asked to leave day camp immediately and no refund will be issued. This is only used in extreme circumstances when other children and instructors' safety is in danger.

Preparing for Nature Day Camp: Supply List

Please pack the following well labeled items for our day camp adventures:

- Backpack
- Nut free lunch and lots of snacks (we will be very active throughout the day!) - There will not be access to a microwave or refrigerator.
- Water bottle and drinks - Drinking water is available for refilling water bottles. Children will be encouraged to stay hydrated throughout the day.
- An extra change of clothes including underwear and socks
- Rain gear (i.e. waterproof boots, pants, jacket, or one piece suit)
- Closed toed shoes suitable for running
- Sun hat
- Swimming gear – swimsuit and towel, water shoes (there are zebra mussels in Upper Rideau Lake, flotation equipment if your child requires it)
- Lightweight breathable clothing (i.e. cotton)
- An old shirt to cover clothing when we are painting or doing other messy crafts
- Bug Jacket (optional)
- Insect repellent and sunscreen
- The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority and local Health Unit recommend the following things for visits to any natural area as seasonally appropriate:
 - Long light coloured pants and long-sleeved shirts in lightweight fabric for breathability
 - Closed-toed shoes
 - Insect repellent that contains DEET or Icaridin
 - Sunscreen and hat
 - Checking thoroughly for ticks when you return home
 - For more information on environmental health, visit www.healthunit.org or call the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit at 613-345-5685.

DO NOT BRING: Gum or candy, electronics (including video games, iPods/MP3 players, cell phones, etc.), money, valuables, special belongings that may be lost or broken, knives, multi-tools

A note to parents/caregivers:

Campers should wear clothes that can get soiled – clothes that are damaged or soiled at day dCamp are the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian and will not be replaced by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority.

Warm Weather Tips:

For warmer weather we ask that your child wear light weight breathable fabrics such as cotton. If possible, light weight long sleeves and pants are ideal for sun and environmental hazards such as ticks and poison ivy. Children are encouraged to wear a hat at all times. Our programs are altered slightly in order to stay in the coolest places during the warmest times of the day.

Sunscreen and Bug Spray

Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp requires all participants to arrive with sunscreen and bug spray applied. Children may bring extra if it will need to be re-applied later in the program. Educators and volunteers will assist children in re-application if needed.

Lost Items

Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp is not responsible for any lost or stolen items while on site. We encourage parents to label everything coming with your child to help ensure it ends up back home. Any items left at day camp will be placed in a Lost and Found, which will be made available on request.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Time and Location

Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp will be run out of our Interpretive Centre located at 480 Foley Mountain Lane. The camp is run out of the “Nature Discovery Centre” in the basement of the Interpretive Centre. Follow down the stone steps to the basement entrance.

Children may be dropped off at day camp no earlier than 9:00am. All children must be promptly picked up by a designated person at 4:00pm.

For safety purposes, you must sign your child in each morning when they are dropped off. At pick up time a child will not be released into any adult’s care until the child has been signed out.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Authorization

We ask that parents/guardian give Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp written authorization for the people who may have access to their children (i.e. a relative who picks up child, emergency contact in cases where parents cannot be reached). If written authorization is not possible, the parent must phone or email us to give authorization. Parents/guardian must notify day camp staff before changing the usual pick-up routine. We always act in the best interests of the child if there is any confusion or uncertainty.

Here are examples of situation where we may not allow your child for pick up:

- If a person appears intoxication or impaired
- a family member/friend comes to pick up your child without written or verbal consent

As bound by the education act, staff members are legally responsible to protect the children in their care from any perceived risk.

Inclement Weather Policy/Closure Policy

If the weather/road conditions make travel to/from Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp unsafe for either staff or participants and we need to cancel programs for that day, we will notify you by telephone and/or email at least one hour prior to the time the program would have started.

If the weather makes it necessary for Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp to close earlier than normal, this decision will be communicated to families by phone such that they are able to make the necessary arrangements with for early pick-up.

Extreme Weather Policy

Educators and volunteers at Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp consult the forecast regularly, and weather-related safety is considered in all decision-making (i.e. how far to venture away from the building, how long to be outside, etc.).

In the case of predicted thunder and lightning or high-winds, day camp educators/volunteers will ensure participants are close to shelter so that it may be sought quickly should thunder and lightning or high-winds occur. During thunder and lightning and high winds, participants will stay under shelter (in the building, or under the picnic shelter, for example).

In the case of extreme heat (30C), day camp educators/volunteers will limit participants' length of exposure based on age/outerwear, and will constantly assess participants' comfort and safety, and watching for sign of heat related health issues.

COMMUNICATION

General Communication

Generally, Foley Mountain Nature Day Camp will communicate with participants predominantly via email. To reach us in a timely manner, please send an email to rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca or call 613-273-3255. If you need to reach someone on the day of a program, call 613-539-8048.

Please be sure to communicate the following:

- If you will be late/absent
- If any member of your group is ill with a communicable disease
- If any member of your group is being treated for lice

Emergency Communication

In the event of an emergency at day camp, parents/guardians will be contacted by telephone once emergency personnel (if needed) have been contacted.

In the event that weather/road conditions make travel to/from day camp dangerous for staff and participants and day camp needs to cancel programs or close early for the day, families will be notified by telephone.